

This document is being submitted in the hopes that it will dispel some of the myths about Winlink.

1: Winlink is competing with commercial services like SailMail and Iridium GO for the marine users.

This is false; it actually far predates the beginning of SailMail, as what is now known as Winlink is an outgrowth of AP-link. When it was created, there were no commercial options in existence for the maritime users to send short text messages to their loved ones on shore. SailMail only came into existence after the concept of sending such messages was proven possible by hams running what was at the time called Net-Link. Many marine users actually have both; SailMail for any commercial uses they might have for messages, Winlink as a backup for when they run out of connection time on SailMail. This myth has its origin in the fact that the original message client for Winlink is the exact same one used for SailMail, which is because the team that created SailMail were already users of Winlink and the client was available to them.

2: Winlink allows unlimited connections and has no limit on length of time a station can remain connected and they do not have limits on how big messages can be.

False; any user of Winlink is limited to two hours of use per day over RF and maximum session length is 30 minutes by default, which limits users to 4 sessions per day. Using Iridium GO, which is an available connection option in Winlink Express, this is dependent on how much airtime a user has available. Telnet connections over LAN and commercial internet services don't have time limits, though the software will disconnect from the Common Message Servers when the message transfer (if any) is done. RMS operators can set different limits based on specific requirements (limiting users that "hog the connection" for example). Also, message size limits do exist, and the Winlink website provides full message statistics regarding average message size voluntarily.

3: Winlink allows users to surf the Internet.

Absurdly false; this one is based on assumptions made from fragments of comments submitted in RM-11708 that can easily be handled via text based messaging (aka email). So many sites on the world wide web require high bandwidth data pipes that it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to completely load the main site page over the very slow HF data connections that exist with current amateur hardware used before hitting the session time limit. The fact is, the only application on the computer used to send the messages is the one initiating the connection via the modem; none of the normal applications can do so, by deliberate design decisions made early on in the development.

4: Winlink could potentially become a source of excessive bandwidth use via "spam" emails.

False; the CMS system has a complex Whitelist/Blacklist system in place that prevents any messages from coming into the system from the Internet unless a specific user has previously sent a message to a specific internet email user first. Winlink Express also has a facility that allows a user to see what messages are on the CMS and pick which ones to download over an RF connection based on message size to optimize data throughput per session. Messages over the size limit can only be read via the user's webmail account, as they cannot be transferred any other way.

5: There is no way to identify interfering stations running Pactor 2, 3 or 4 (currently only legal outside the US), so we can't identify the source of the interference on (insert band here).

False; several commercially available ham radio digital mode decoding applications support Pactor 1, and the FEC ID used by later versions is the same since later Pactor controllers support any version of Pactor that might be used. Even then, if you know the approximate frequency the interference occurred on, it is extremely simple to view the Winlink website's list of station locations and find out at least one of the stations involved, because that information is readily available there. The only thing that isn't clearly stated due to display limitations is whether or not a station outside of the 97.221 sub-bands is actually running at the 500 Hz limit, if it's a US based station.